Business Plan
2016–2017

Department of Environment

NOVA SCOTIA

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Message from the Minister of Nova Scotia Environment

Honourable Margaret Miller
Minister of Environment

I am pleased to present the Business Plan for Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) for the fiscal year 2016-2017.

The plan outlines NSE's expanded mandate, shows how it links to government's priorities and provides examples of priority projects under NSE's core responsibilities and services.

Government expanded NSE's mandate in 2015 by consolidating the regulatory compliance, inspection, and enforcement functions from the Departments of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Health and Wellness, and Natural Resources within NSE. To achieve this broader mandate, in 2016 NSE will implement a new organizational structure and work with its partner departments for improved protection of our environment/natural resources, human and animal health.

Working with the Office of Regulatory and Service Effectiveness, in 2016-2017, NSE will continue its work to review and modernize environmental regulations. We will focus on areas of greatest impact on the environment and public health, help reduce administrative burden, offer on-line services to clients for notifications and approvals processing, and support program management and delivery, while ensuring protection of the environment and public health.

Many of NSE's core responsibilities for protecting the environment and human health are contained in the Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act. This Act is closely linked to economic outcomes through its 25 goals and the long-term objective of the Province to achieve sustainable prosperity. A priority for 2016 will be to initiate the second five-year review of the Act.

Other priorities for NSE for 2016-2017 include working with other departments to support a green economy, protecting additional land, reducing Nova Scotia's greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the impacts of climate change.

We will continue to collaborate with other departments, municipalities, and stakeholders to deliver on our mandate of protecting the environment and human health, while supporting the growth of our economy for Nova Scotians.

Sincerely,

Honourable Margaret Miller
Minister of Environment

Nova Scotia Environment

2016-2017 Business Plan

MANDATE

Nova Scotia Environment's (NSE) mandate expanded in 2015 through the transfer of compliance, inspection and enforcement responsibilities, and associated staff from the departments of Health and Wellness, Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, and Natural Resources.

Transferred from Department of	NSE's Expanded Compliance Role
Agriculture	Food protection and animal welfare
Fisheries and Aquaculture	Fish processing, buying and aquaculture
Health and Wellness	Protecting health through regulation of tobacco, tattoo parlors, tanning beds and snow sport helmets
Natural Resources	Forest resources, protected areas, wildlife, parks, beaches, hunting and recreation fishing

NSE's mandate is to:

- Support and promote the protection, enhancement and prudent use of the environment through strong regulatory frameworks and compliance programs, including education.
- Provide a strong regulatory framework and enforcement mechanisms to ensure a safe food supply for all Nova Scotians.
- Work with others to understand how the environment affects health and act together with our partners, stakeholders and communities to protect health and promote health supportive environments.
- Ensure compliance with appropriate acts to ensure those buying, processing or selling fish have the appropriate license to do so and to ensure aquaculture sites are operating in compliance with the regulations.
- Provide for the establishment, management, protection and use of wilderness areas.
- Provide for the preservation, protection and study of ecological sites that are considered important parts of the natural heritage of the Province and promote understanding and appreciation of same among the people of the Province.
- Improve the quality of life in Nova Scotia, in cooperation with communities, by protecting, conserving and enhancing our natural resources.
- Deliver compliance and enforcement services to ensure the sustainable use of Nova Scotia's natural resources.

- Support the use and enjoyment of the outdoors in a way that minimizes risks to the environment.
- Promote the interconnections between the health of the economy, the environment and the people of the Province, and promote the Province's environmental assets as essential to the long-term prosperity of the Province.

NSE will implement a new organizational structure in 2016 to achieve our broader mandate. Combining compliance, inspection and enforcement will lead to improved protection of our environment/natural resources, human and animal health.

In 2015, NSE revised its vision to capture its expanded mandate. The vision is:

> *A leader in regulatory excellence, conservation, partnership and promotion, we protect the environment, human health and animal health.*

LINK TO GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

There are two key objectives of the department that support and contribute to government's key priorities of "People, Innovation and Education."

Protecting Health (People)

With the transfer of the Environmental Health Division from the Department of Health and Wellness, and the Food Protection and Enforcement Division from the Department of Agriculture, NSE has significantly expanded its responsibilities for protecting the health of Nova Scotians.

Collectively, our work in health and environmental protection is aimed at reducing chemical, biological and physical risks, and creating supportive environments to promote a healthy population.

Actions	1. Work with departments to coordinate provincial efforts to ensure Nova Scotia meets its commitments to reduce greenhouse gases and prepare for impacts of climate change. 2. Work with emitters to reduce emissions that contribute to the formation of ground-level ozone and particulate matter, as well as to maintain the provincial ambient air monitoring network to measure and report on achievement. 3. Focus on continuous improvement to drinking water programs. 4. Implement the Safe Body Art inspection program in support of the Act and Regulations. 5. Focus on continuous improvement within the provincial food safety programs. 6. Enforce the province's aquaculture regulations.

Inputs	NSE will undertake these actions through resources contained within existing programs.
Measures	1. Continuous reduction in Nova Scotia's greenhouse gas output and support and tools provided to prepare for impacts of climate change. 2. Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) achieved for ground-level ozone and fine particulate matter in each of the four air zones: Central, Eastern, Northern and Western. 3. Percentage of population served by municipal drinking water supplies that meet health-based criteria for microbiological quality. 4. Number of body art facilities operating in the province inspected and permitted.

Regulatory Excellence (Innovation)

During the past three years, the department reviewed and modernized environmental regulations. Elements of this work included:

- Focusing on risk to ensure programs are focused on areas of greatest impact to the environment and public health.
- Reducing administrative burden to business and improving support provided to municipalities.
- Using technology to support improved program management and delivery.

Actions	1. Implement a System for Notification and Approval Processing (SNAP) to improve consistency, efficiency and transparency, as well as offer on-line services to clients for Environment and Public Health functions. 2. For some low and medium risk activities, NSE will continue to move towards requirement for "notification" rather than "approval" as it can be less burdensome for both business and the department, while continuing to meet environmental outcomes. 3. Review year one implementation of the redeveloped watercourse alteration program, including the notification tool. 4. Develop and implement approaches to the Solid Waste Resource Management Program that helps Nova Scotia harmonize with other provinces, enhances stewardship and fosters innovative approaches to diverting solid waste resources from landfills.
Inputs	NSE will undertake these actions through resources contained within existing programs.
Measures	1. Percentage of clients using the new on-line system (SNAP). 2. Increase in the number of activities requiring notification versus approval.

	3. Evaluation of the redeveloped watercourse alteration program and the notification tool to ensure planned efficiencies were realized and support further use of this tool. 4. Number of actions taken that helps Nova Scotia harmonize with other provinces, enhances stewardship and fosters innovative approaches to diverting solid waste resources from landfill.

CORE RESPONSIBILITIES/SERVICES

NSE's core responsibilities are reflected and embedded in its mandate of protecting the environment, human health and animal health through:

- Regulatory excellence
- Compliance, inspection and enforcement
  - Environment/Natural Resources (land, air, water)
  - Food protection
  - Animal welfare
  - Public health
  - Fish processing, buying and aquaculture
- Gathering and understanding evidence, using science
- Education, outreach and transparency
- Approvals, permits, licenses and notifications
- Sharing information on environmental and health risks
- Programs/services that include:
  - Air Quality monitoring and reporting
  - Climate Change (includes adaptation and mitigation)
  - Contaminated Sites
  - Drinking Water, Water Resources
  - Water and wastewater treatment facilities
  - Protected Areas
  - Solid Waste

While carrying out its mandate and core responsibilities, NSE will focus on three priorities for fiscal 2016-2017 that are important to Nova Scotians:

1. ***Environmental Goals and Sustainable Prosperity Act* (EGSPA)/Green Economy**: Continue to work towards achieving EGSPA goals and long-term objective, including coordinating reporting across departments.
2. **Consolidation**: Continue the consolidation of compliance, inspection and enforcement programs. This will include workforce planning and implementation of a compliance model and risk based approach.
3. **Protected Areas**: The EGSPA goal has been achieved with over 12 per cent of the land mass legally protected. NSE will work with the Department of Natural Resources to achieve

13 per cent protected lands, primarily through the addition of parcels of land with no negative recreational or economic effects. NSE will also focus on implementing a management planning framework for protected lands.

EGSPA and the Green Economy

NSE will continue to work towards achieving the goals established in EGSPA. The Act encompasses many of the department's core responsibilities of protecting the environment and human health, and is also closely linked to economic outcomes. The Act contains 25 goals to support the environment and economy and involves a number of departments in meeting its commitments and vision.

The Minister of Environment is responsible for administering EGSPA and is required to report annually to the House of Assembly on the progress made toward achieving the goals. The Minister is also required to have a review of the Act conducted every five years.

Among EGSPA's goals is the commitment to advance a strategy for growth of the green economy. NSE will work with the Department of Business in support of a greener economy.

Actions	1. Lead preparation for the legislated 2017 review of EGSPA. 2. Continue to work towards the goals in EGSPA for which NSE is responsible. 3. Support the integration of greener economy objectives with shared economic goals.
Inputs	NSE will undertake these actions through resources contained within existing programs.
Measures	1. The second five-year review of EGSPA is initiated in 2016 and completed by end of calendar year 2017. 2. Goals are either achieved, maintained and/or substantive progress made towards achievement of intent and timelines outlined in EGSPA. 3. New initiatives that advance the green economy.

Consolidation

Following government's decision to consolidate key compliance activities within NSE effective July 1, 2015, NSE has worked with its partner Departments of Health and Wellness, Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture, and Natural Resources to ensure the effective transfer of staff and resources. In 2016, a new organizational structure will be implemented to align resources for the most consistent, effective and efficient delivery of our programs and services. Consolidated models for compliance, inspection and enforcement will be developed.

Actions	1. Continue to work with our partner departments in considering all aspects of the compliance integration that include agreements, structure and logistics to create a best-in-class compliance, inspection and enforcement division. 2. Implement the new organizational structure. 3. Develop a risk-based inspection schedule to focus inspection resources on those regulated entities that pose the greatest risks to environment, human and animal health. 4. Develop and implement a new compliance model that reflects all areas of the department's business based upon consolidation of compliance, inspection and enforcement functions.
Inputs	NSE will undertake these actions through resources contained within existing programs.
Measures	1. Agreements are in place with partner departments to ensure seamless delivery of compliance, inspection and enforcement services. 2. The new structure is implemented and includes the alignment of resources for cost effectiveness and efficient service delivery. 3. Increased proportion of inspections focused on high risk activities in tandem with decreased time spent on low-risk activities. 4. Staff understand and consistently apply NSE's consolidated compliance model aimed at using a variety of tools to encourage compliance with the rules that protect the environment, human and animal health.

Protected Areas

Along with protecting additional land, in 2016, NSE will begin to shift its focus to the management of protected areas to ensure the protection of the environment while supporting the delivery of social and economic benefits. This work will be guided by a new management and planning framework that will help focus the application of resources and decision-making towards areas of highest environmental or public safety risk, as well as wilderness areas with the greatest potential for recreation and tourism development.

Actions	1. NSE will work with the Department of Natural Resources to achieve a goal of 13 per cent protected land, primarily through the addition of parcels of land with no negative recreational or economic effects. 2. Implement a framework for protected areas management.
Inputs	NSE will undertake these actions through resources contained within existing programs.
Measures	1. Progress made towards protecting 13 per cent of land in keeping with government's criteria listed in action one above. 2. Amount of land where management tools are in place.

Budget Context

Departmental Expenses Summary

($ thousands)

Programs and Services	2015-2016 Estimate	2015-2016 Forecast	2016-2017 Estimate
Administration	896	894	892
Policy	4,605	4,515	4,943
Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement	12,082	12,078	23,394
Sustainability and Applied Science	7,760	7,656	7,571
Total - Departmental Expenses	25,343	25,143	36,800
Ordinary Recoveries	0	151	0
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	237.9	223.8	354.8

Note:

For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2

For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1